To S. Thayer, Jr. ?

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Roxbury, Oct. 25, 1870.

My Dear Friend:

I am glad to be able to break my long enforced silence.

Eight weeks ago, last Sunday, I came down with what seemed to be a congestive fever, which struck heavily upon the brain, causing it to feel as if it had been crushed — a symptom which, while it lasted, caused Dr. Geist a good deal of anxiety. At the end of a fortnight I was measurably relieved of the pressure; but there followed, throughout my system, leaving not an inch exempted, a most intolerable burning and itching, which continued night and day, (more aggravated in the night,) and which nothing alleviated whether the varied treatment was internally or externally applied. The torment was like unto the "everlasting burnings" of the Calvinistic place of punishment for the incorrigibly impenitent: it almost drove me frantic.

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For several weeks life was a burden, and I was utterly wretched. No sleep came to my eyes, no slumber to my eyelids, except a little drowsiness by day. My nights were incessantly occupied with bathing, rubbing, and scratching the body till complete exhaustion followed. This condition of the skin was pronounced to be eczema; and I then remembered that your venerable father was troubled with it. Believing that my friend Dr. Dow, of Providence, would be able to give me some relief by his electrical battery and Turkish baths, I followed his treatment for a fortnight; but though it produced a soothing effect for the moment, in the end my skin appeared to be more sensitive than ever, and I returned home quite as miserable as when I went to Providence, and a good deal discouraged, especially as I had the brain very seriously affected. Of course, I was not in a condition to

visit or see company, to read or carry on any epistolary correspondence.

I ought to have stated that while my skin trouble was pronounced eczema, there were no sores or eruptions upon my body; but under the cuticle there could be felt, in various parts, a tetter-like humor.

A fortnight ago, our dear friend Samuel J. May made us a visit, tarrying [illegible] one night

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